

Application No. 10/711,841
Technology Center 2827
Amendment dated October 27, 2006
Reply to Office Action dated June 28, 2006

REMARKS

In the Office Action, the Examiner reviewed claims 1-27 of the above-identified US Patent Application, with the result that the dependent claims were objected to for using the indefinite instead of definite article to introduce the preamble, dependent claims 5 and 6 (which depend from independent claim 1) and dependent claims 15 and 16 (which depend from independent claim 11) were deemed to recite allowable subject matter, and the remaining claims were rejected under 35 USC §102. In the present response, Applicants have amended the claims as set forth above. More particularly:

The dependent claims have been amended to overcome the claim objection.

Independent claims 1 and 11 have been amended to incorporate the limitations of their respective dependent claims 5 and 15 pursuant to the Examiner's conclusion that claims 5 and 15 recite allowable subject matter. As such, independent claims 1 and 11 and claims depending therefrom are believed to be allowable over the prior art of record.

Independent method claim 21 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 5 in a manner that Applicants believe renders method claim 21 and its dependent claims allowable for the same reasons as stated for independent claims 1 and 11.

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Dependent claim 6 has been rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of its base claim 1, pursuant to the Examiner's conclusion that claim 6 recites allowable subject matter.

Dependent claim 16 has been rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of its base claim 11, pursuant to the Examiner's conclusion that claim 16 recites allowable subject matter.

In view of the limitations of dependent claim 5 being incorporated into claim 1 and dependent claim 6 being rewritten as an independent claim, claim 5 has been amended to recite the limitation found in original claim 6.

In view of the limitations of dependent claim 15 being incorporated into claim 11 and dependent claim 16 being rewritten as an independent claim, claim 15 has been amended to recite the limitation found in original claim 16.

New dependent claim 28 depends from independent method claim 21 and recites the limitations originally found in claim 6, and new dependent claims 29 and 30 depend from independent claims 6, and 16, respectively, and recite the limitations originally found in claims 5 and 15, respectively.

Applicants believe that the above amendments do not present new matter, and that the amendments have the effect of complying with the Examiner's determination that dependent claims 5, 6, 15, and 16 recite allowable subject matter. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection under 35 USC §102.

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Closing

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully request that their patent application be given favorable reconsideration.

Should the Examiner have any questions with respect to any matter now of record, Applicants' representative may be reached at (219) 462-4999.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachment: Petition for Extension of Time